

From:
To: [Community Affairs Committee \(SEN\)](#)
Subject: Submission to the Inquiry into the National Disability Insurance Scheme Bill 2012
Date: Friday, 25 January 2013 1:05:49 PM

Please consider this email a formal submission by me to the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs Inquiry into the National Disability Insurance Scheme Bill 2012.

The current disability system has many problems that need to be addressed.

I work as a Clinical Neuropsychologist in a major Sydney teaching hospital. I am employed to provide neuropsychological assessments for HIV patients, however, I am frequently approached by services requesting assessment of individuals with cognitive impairments on a wide variety of background issues (past head injury, stroke, psychiatric issues, queried developmental issues, queried impairment from past drug and alcohol issues, etc, etc.). Regretfully, there is not the scope to assess these individuals with no other neuropsychologist employed in the hospital and a lack of other options in other hospitals or community services to enable assessment through other means. While there are neuropsychologists working in private practice the costs of seeking assessment privately preclude this as a viable option. There are medicare rebates available for Clinical Psychology/Psychology services yet nothing under Medicare (and lack of cover under Private Health funds) for specialist Neuro psychological assessments services. This is an area that many GPs, Psychiatrists, Neurologists, Geriatricians, and Rehabilitation specialists would like to have access to.

If there were adequate options for access to neuropsychological assessment it would provide highly appropriate information for service providers regarding the person's cognitive function, areas of strength and impairment, recommendations for strategies to assist in managing the areas of weakness and guidance for what other services might be required to support the individual (e.g. housing, guardianship, financial management, communication needs, etc).

With so much in the news about disability, aging populations and mental health issues I see the absence of capacity to adequately and appropriately assess an individual's cognitive function and capacity as a disservice to the individual, their carers, medical providers, support workers and the community.

The main features of the NDIS that will make a difference to the community are:

People with a disability can plan their lives and pursue their goals and dreams,
The ability to receive services when needed and in the way that suits the person,
Increased ability to coordinate services to suit the "whole" person/family

The most important services for the NDIS to provide are:

Therapy and allied health services, Accommodation options, Case management, planning and coordination

I support the introduction of the NDIS.

It will hopefully enable a more cohesive and appropriate means of assessing and meeting the needs of those with disabilities, and for them and their carers to have a better quality of life. I am saddened by experiences of many with

disabilities who struggle and appear to fall between the gaps in the current health care and support service systems.

I agree for my submission to be made public

Regards,

Ms Margaret Bain